

12.57 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

[*Translation*]

- (i) **Need to make proper lighting arrangements and to carry out necessary repairs on National Highway No. 28A connecting Muzaffarpur with Nepal border.**

SHRIMATI PRABHAWATI GUPTA (Motihari) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to draw the Governments attention to an important matter under Rule 377.

The National Highway No. 28A, which connects Muzaffarpur with the border of Nepal, *via* Motihari—Rasaul, is full of pot holes and is in a dilapidated condition. There are no lighting arrangements on the entire Highway which remains plunged in darkness at night, due to which the people travelling on this route have to face a lot of problems and there are frequent accidents on this road which cause a great loss of life and property. Therefore, I would request the Government to make arrangements for the repair and lighting of highway No. 28A to prevent loss of life and property.

[*English*]

- (ii) **Demand for setting up a Cultural Centre at Mithila in North Bihar during Seventh Five Year Plan.**

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhanjharpur) : According to present indications, the Central Government is planning to set up Cultural Centres in different regions of the country. These Centres will encompass the cultures of these areas. While some of these Cultural Centres will become operational even earlier, all of them will become ready by the end of the current Five-Year Plan, i.e., 1990.

These Cultural Centres are proposed at Patiala (for North Zone), Shantiniketan (East), Thanjavur (South), Udaipur (West), Allahabad (North-Central). Dimapur (North-East) and Nagpur (South-Central).

In this connection it is requested that a Cultural Centre be set up at Mithila in North Bihar also during the current Five-Year Plan. Mithila has been a seat of culture since time immemorial. Thousands of years ago, Raja Janak, the father of Sita, ruled this region and patronised the rich Mithila culture. Since then, the people of Mithila have preserved their culture despite heavy odds.

If a Cultural Centre is set up here, it will assure creative development and revival of various forms of art. This will also make the people of Mithila conscious about their cultural heritage.

This proposed Cultural Centre at Mithila would be at the central place of the eastern part of the country. Mithila (Madhubani) painting and handicrafts of Mithila are known world over. Similarly, other folklore and wedding customs of Mithila are quite different from other parts of the country.

There are a number of other strong reasons for setting up a Cultural Centre in Mithila either at Madhubani or at Darbhanga and I earnestly request the Centre to consider this proposal sympathetically.

13.00 hrs.

[*Translation*]

- (iii) **Need to examine the feasibility of generating hydro-electricity in Pithoragarh, U. P.**

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : There is a great potential in the hill areas of Uttar Pradesh, specially Pithoragarh for generating hydro-electricity. Even after the take over of the whole Sharda river valley for the purpose of electricity generation, the Hydro Electricity Corporation has not made any headway and its work is still at the survey stage. The same is the condition of the minor power projects. During the last two years, the survey work regarding 15 minor power projects has been completed but the Uttar Pradesh Minor Hydrel Power Corporation is showing laxity in the construction work.

I would, therefore, request that the possibilities of generating electricity should also be studied at Saryu river and Ramganga river along with Sharda valley in Pithoragarh. The construction work at Dhauliganga Phase I should be started immediately. The Uttar Pradesh Minor Hydel Power Corporation should be provided with the required loan so that it may start construction work at Minor Hydro Electricity Projects. Local persons should be given employment in Hydro Electricity Projects.

[English]

- (iv) **Need to set up urgently the proposed sponge iron plant at Vijayanagar in Karnataka.**

SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI (Bellary) : The foundation stone of the sponge iron plant at Vijayanagar in Karnataka was laid by our late lamented leader, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, in October, 1971. But till now no progress has been made in setting up the Plant except the acquisition of about 3,700 hectares of land and the construction of an administrative block and some quarters at the project site.

The Central Government has yet to take a decision on setting up the Plant though the proposal was sent to it for approval in 1984.

The Centre has earmarked Rs. 10 crores for setting up of steel plants in the country during the Seventh Plan period. The allocation is so inadequate that neither the Vijayanagar Plant nor the Nilachal Plant in Orissa could make any headway in the near future.

The Karnataka Government is ready to create infrastructure facilities and it can supply the required quantity of power and water.

Therefore, I request the Government to approve the proposal sent in 1984 and to set up the sponge iron plant at Vijayanagar immediately.

- (v) **Need for Legislation to ensure minimum wages and humane conditions of work to agricultural labourers in the country.**

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : The agricultural labourers, apart from their exploitation as wage labourers, are continued to be subjected to feudal form of exploitation despite repeated promises made by the Government to alleviate their conditions. Reports given by two agricultural labour enquiries and two rural labour enquiries reveal the extent of their poverty, deprivation and land lessness and also exploitation and domination to which they are still subjected. Bonded labour still survives in many parts of the country despite legislations against it and Government's programme to rehabilitate them has made no significant impact on their lives. Still now, a very large number of hired attached labourers suffer from an acute sense of insecurity, tied as they are to one employer and can be removed at will. The hired casual labourers are offered wages which do not meet the basic minimum requirement of their families. On top of all these, they are subjected to all kinds of atrocities including burning of their huts, abduction, rape of their women and killings. A large majority of them belong to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes.

To end this exploitation, what is necessary is a Central legislation on agricultural labourers which would ensure a minimum wage and human conditions of work. The Government should take drastic measures to put an end to social oppression.

- (vi) **Need to constitute the Cauvery Water Tribunal to solve Cauvery river dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.**

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU (Gobichetti-palayam) : The Cauvery river dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka has not been settled till now. The Government of Tamil Nadu has urged the Central Government on a number of occasions to take action to settle the issue as early as possible. The perennial river Cauvery in Tamil Nadu is dried up and the agriculturists are facing drought conditions. The Chief Minister of